

**Iowa Department of Natural Resources
Natural Resource Commission**

ITEM

9

DECISION

TOPIC

Land Acquisition Project Approval

1. Kettleston Hogsback WMA – Dickinson County – Kilts

The Natural Resource Commission is requested to approve the acquisition of a tract of land located adjacent to the western and southern boundaries of DNR Wildlife Bureau Headquarters three miles northwest of Spirit Lake. The 42.52-acre tract is owned jointly by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (50%) and Larry and Fern Kilts (50%). Bette and William Lanning donated their 50% interest in the property to the Iowa DNR December 12, 2000. Larry and Fern Kilts are offering their 50% interest for the appraised value of \$103,000.00.

Licensed appraiser, Steven K. Schmidt of Schmidt Appraisal Services, Spirit Lake, Iowa submitted the appraisal. The purchase agreement was negotiated by Jerry Gibson.

The subject tract has 32.35 acres of cropland; 4.67 acres of remnant prairie; and 5.5 acres of an existing building site. Road right-of-way adds an additional 1.5 acres. The north tract has an existing building site which consists of a dilapidated dwelling, garage, and wood-framed out buildings. All buildings are highly depreciated and contribute no value. The acquisition will allow increased recreational use by the public, eliminate continuous trespass issues, greatly improve management efforts, add needed upland nesting habitat, benefit non-game migratory bird species, and provide increased protection for water quality.

Acquisition funding will be federal Prairie Lakes II NAWCA (100%). Incidental closing costs will be the responsibility of the Department.

Staff recommends approval of the land acquisition.

2. Rice Lake WMA – Worth County – Colby Pioneer Peat Company

The Natural Resource Commission is requested to approve the acquisition of a tract of land located 2 miles northwest of Joice, Iowa adjacent to the Rice Lake Wildlife Management Area. The 30-acre parcel is being offered by the Colby Pioneer Peat Company (John and Malcolm Colby) for the appraised price of \$63,000.00.

Licensed appraiser, Fred Greder, Benchmark Agribusiness, Inc., Mason City, Iowa provided the appraisal. Jerry Gibson negotiated the purchase agreement.

The property consists of 28.75 acres of an area previously mined for peat until the peat reserves were exhausted, and 1.25 acres of road right-of-way/waste. The residual property consists of trees and shallow wetlands. The DNR plans to restore two 20-acre basins which will provide excellent habitat for waterfowl and shore birds

Acquisition funding consists of a \$2,000.00 commitment from the local chapter of Pheasants Forever, and \$61,000.00 from NAWCA-Prairie Lakes III. Incidental closing costs are the responsibility of the Department.

Staff recommends approval of the land acquisition.

3. Union Grove State Park – Tama County – American Legion of Gladbrook

The Natural Resource Commission is requested to approve the acquisition of a one-acre in-holding within the boundaries of Union Grove State Park in Tama County. Union Grove is located three miles south of Gladbrook, Iowa. The American Legion is offering this one-acre tract for \$5,000.00.

Jerry Gibson negotiated the purchase agreement. Union Grove State Park has numerous private rural residential properties adjacent to its boundaries, and the negotiated price is below the price of a rural residential lot.

The American Legion acquired the property in 1940 for members to use for meetings and recreational outings. If approved, the Parks Bureau plans to build a rental cabin on the site using funding donated to the DNR from an anonymous donor. An existing picnic shelter would need to be demolished prior the construction of the rental cabin.

Acquisition funding will be from REAP-Open Spaces (100%). Incidental closing costs will be the responsibility of the Department.

Staff recommends approval of the land acquisition.

4. Lansing WMA – Allamakee County – INHF

The Natural Resource Commission's approval is requested to purchase a tract of land located in Allamakee County adjacent to state-owned and managed Lansing Wildlife Management Area. Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation offers this 23-acre tract for the price of \$61,400. INHF acquired the property in December 2009 for \$65,000. The appraised price of the tract is \$66,400.

Joel Klemish, Licensed Appraiser of Strawberry Point, Iowa, submitted the appraisal. Rick Hansen negotiated the purchase agreement.

This irregular-shaped property is located 2 miles north of Lansing in northeastern Allamakee County. The steep, heavily wooded tract overlooks the Mississippi River. There are no building improvements. Access is provided by state-owned land adjacent west.

This tract will provide for wildlife habitat, and enhance public recreation to this area. In addition, the area is a possible future nesting bluff for the Peregrine Falcon. The Wildlife Bureau will manage the property in accord with the area management plan.

Acquisition funding will be \$36,400 from Wildlife Habitat Stamp and \$25,000 REAP Open Spaces. The tract will remain on the property tax rolls. No boundary survey or fencing cost is anticipated. Incidental closing costs will be the responsibility of the Department.

Staff recommends approval of the land acquisition.

5. Muskrat Slough WMA – Jones County – McQuillen

The Natural Resource Commission's approval is requested to purchase a tract of land located in Jones County located north of state-owned and managed Muskrat Slough Wildlife Management Area. Matthew McQuillen offers this 16-acre tract for the price of \$58,200. The appraised price of \$71,200 was discounted as the seller will retain the remaining 14 CRP payments. This reservation will require the seller to remain in compliance, as operator, with CRP regulations.

Jamie Nabb, Licensed Appraiser of Mt. Vernon, Iowa, submitted the appraisal.

This tract will increase the Muskrat Slough area to 710 acres, and will add high quality diversity to the existing wetland complex. The acquisition will provide upland nesting habitat, improve surface water quality, and enhance public recreation to this area. In addition, this acquisition will provide protection to the Eastern Prairie Fringed Orchid which is a federally threatened and state endangered species. The Wildlife Bureau will manage the property in accord with the area management plan.

Acquisition funding will be provided by Wildlife Habitat Stamp. The property will remain on the property tax rolls. Incidental closing costs will be the responsibility of the Department.

Staff recommends approval of the land acquisition.

6. Muskrat Slough WMA – Jones County – McQuillen

The Natural Resource Commission's approval is requested to accept a donation of 9.4 acres of land located in Jones County located north of state-owned and managed Muskrat Slough Wildlife Management Area. Matthew McQuillen offers to gift this tract of land to the DNR.

The property is a mix of pasture and a small area of tillable land. Acquisition of this property will eliminate the potential for additional dwelling sites at Muskrat Slough.

This tract will increase the Muskrat Slough area to 719 acres, and will add high quality diversity to the existing wetland complex. This addition will provide upland nesting

habitat, improve surface water quality, and enhance public recreation to this area. The Wildlife Bureau will manage the property in accord with the area management plan.

Incidental closing costs will be the responsibility of the Department.

Staff recommends approval of the land acquisition.

7. Viking Lake State Park - Montgomery County – INHF

The Natural Resource Commission's approval is requested to purchase a tract of land located in Montgomery County adjacent east to state-owned and managed Viking Lake State Park. Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation offers this 118-acre tract for the appraised price of \$330,000. INHF acquired the property at auction in October 2009 for \$355,000.

Gary Thien, Licensed Appraiser of Council Bluffs, Iowa, submitted the appraisal. Rick Hansen negotiated the purchase agreement.

This irregular-shaped property is located 4 miles northwest of Villisca in southeastern Montgomery County. The gently sloping to steep, heavily wooded tract is a former United Methodist Church camp. Building improvements include three lodge buildings with dormitories and kitchen facilities and a director's residence. There are also nine RV sites. Access is provided by a county road along the west side.

This tract will provide for overflow camping opportunities, and the existing hiking trails enjoyed by the public. The Parks Bureau will manage the property in accord with the area management plan.

Acquisition funding will be \$330,000 from REAP Open Spaces. The tract will remain on the property tax rolls. No boundary survey or fencing cost is anticipated. Incidental closing costs will be the responsibility of the Department.

Staff recommends approval of the land acquisition.

Travis Baker, Land & Waters Bureau Chief
Conservation and Recreation Division
April 8, 2010

Attachments: acquisition maps